A BRIEF ON GROWING SMALL GROUP

POE**T**REES

"*Sometimes a poem just strikes a precise moment. Small Kindnesses, by Danusha Laméris, feels utterly necessary for our time — a poem celebrating minor, automatic graciousness within a community, which can shine a penetrating light. It's a catalog of small encouragements, unfolding as might a child's palm filled with shiny stones*..." This in the New York Times Magazine September 2019 led to a project with 1300 teenagers worldwide finding examples. Poetrees is a UK adaptation for small groups of any age – families, friends, colleagues, congregations – gathering up their own handfuls of kindness to air and share.

- **Think of a few others who might like to join in**
- **Ask them to read the poem below and...**
- **Keep an eye open for examples seen in everyday life**
- **Gather up and record 20-30 as a PDF - to share on-line or cut up into sentences**
- **Display them as branches of a Poetree – made from anything handy (eg a box)**

SMALL KINDNESSES by Danusha Lameris
I've been thinking about the way, when you walk
down a crowded aisle, people pull in their legs
to let you by. Or how strangers still say "bless you"
when someone sneezes, a leftover
from the Bubonic plague. "Don't die," we are saying.
And sometimes, when you spill lemons
from your grocery bag, someone else will help you
pick them up. Mostly, we don't want to harm each other.
We want to be handed our cup of coffee hot,
and to say thank you to the person handing it. To smile
at them and for them to smile back. For the waitress
to call us honey when she sets down the bowl of clam chowder,
and for the driver in the red pick-up truck to let us pass.
We have so little of each other, now. So far
from tribe and fire. Only these brief moments of exchange.
What if they are the true dwelling of the holy, these
fleeting temples we make together when we say, "Here,
have my seat," "Go ahead — you first," "I like your hat."

Thanks for your kind interest in Handfuls of Small Kindnesses

THE FULL STORY IS AT
www.just1.org.uk/handfulsofkindness
Suggested by hughgibbons@just1.org.uk